

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-7 are rejected. Claims 10-12 are allowed. Claims 8 and 9 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 8 and 9 have been cancelled. Claim 10 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion in order to make it allowable, and claims 2-7 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 10 and secure their allowability.

As a preliminary matter, Applicants note that the Examiner has withdrawn the finality of the Office Action dated April 1, 2004 and has withdrawn the indication of allowability for claims 10-12. Applicant's amendment submitted on July 1, 2004 is based on that previous indication of allowability. Thus, the Examiner has not entered the amendment. In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner also has issued a new rejection of the claims based on the admitted art and JP 8-277132. This amendment is responsive to the outstanding Office Action, and relevant portions of the unentered amendment are repeated herein for the record.

Election/Restriction

The Examiner has considered the Applicant's traversal of the Restriction Requirement that has held claims 8 and 9 withdrawn from consideration. The Requirement has been made final. Applicants have cancelled these claims without prejudice or disclaimer in filing them in a divisional application, and in order to place the present application in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 103

Claims 1-7 and 10-12 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicants Admitted Prior Art in view of JP 8-227132. This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Applicants have cancelled claim 1, which served as the parent for claims 2-7 and have made these remaining claims dependent on allowable claim 10. Claim 10 has been amended to delete reference to the optional condition of the receiving step, namely "or the receiving step is carried out without performing the gas spraying. On the basis of this amendment, all of these claims now should be patentable.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note that the Examiner acknowledges that the receiving step of claim 10, wherein the step is accompanied by "spraying the molten glass with a gas having a flow rate lower than the gas used in the spraying step," is a basis for patentability. Applicants further note that the Examiner takes the position that the steps of claim 10, where the receiving step is conducted without spraying, is known in the art or obvious from the admitted art and the JP reference. Thus, the Examiner finds the claim unpatentable because one of the options recited in the claim is known in the art.

Applicants have cancelled that language, thus making the claim patentable in accordance with the indication by the Examiner that claim 10 would be allowable. Applicants have relied upon this indication of allowability to amend the remaining claims to depend from claim 10 and place the application in condition for allowance.

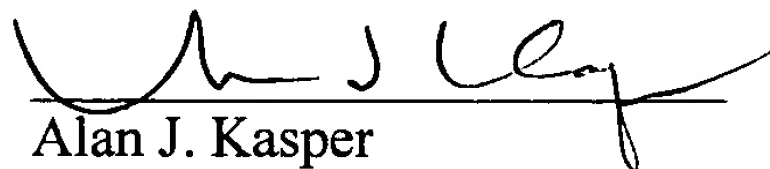
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE
23373
CUSTOMER NUMBER


Alan J. Kasper
Registration No. 25,426

Date: November 15, 2004